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I. LAND AND PEOPLE

1. In its seven years of sovereignty, the Kyrgyz Republic has successfully shown the world that it is a unique ethnic and cultural component of human civilization pursuing its own path of development and has established its place as a democratic and peace-loving State. The attainment of independence was not simply a mechanical transfer of power; it was a very complex and ambiguous process of transition from one status to another. In this context, the fundamental shifts that occurred in people's consciousness and psychology were also complex phenomena: for the most part, the people responded enthusiastically to the social, economic and political reforms, and this is the most important point because the people are the mainspring of the historical process and progress.

2. The Kyrgyz Republic covers an area of 199,900 square kilometres. It comprises six oblasts, 41 districts, 20 cities, 29 areas incorporated as towns, and 422 rural administrations. The capital is Bishkek (600,000 inhabitants).

3. The Kyrgyz Republic is located in the north-eastern region of Central Asia. Lying between the Pamir-Altai mountains in the south-west and the Tien Shan mountains in the north-east, Kyrgyzstan shares borders with Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and China.

4. As of 1 January 1998 the total population was 4.7 million; the urban population numbered 1.6 million (34 per cent of the total) and the rural population 3.1 million (66 per cent). There were 2.3 million males and 2.4 million females, respectively 49 and 51 per cent of the total population.

5. Age structure of the population. As of 1 January 1998 children and adolescents under 16 years of age numbered 1.8 million, representing 39 per cent of the total population. Persons of working age (males between 16 and 59 and females between 16 and 54 years of age) accounted for 51 per cent of the population. There were 500,000 pensioners (10 per cent). The mean length of life was 62 years for males and 71 years for females.

6. The demographic situation is characterized by falling birth and crude death rates and a decline in the migratory movement of the population out of the Republic. This is particularly evident in Bishkek and Chu oblast, where the birth rate has fallen to 14.5 and 16.2 respectively. The fall in the birth rate is attributable to the sharp deterioration in the social and economic condition of society. By depressing the level of family welfare, that deterioration is negatively affecting reproductive behaviour.

7. State policy to protect the reproductive health of the population focuses on maintaining the optimum inter-pregnancy interval and is resulting in a reduced incidence of childbirth in families in risk groups in particular.

8. There were approximately 35,000 deaths in 1997 (7.5 per 1,000), a decrease compared with 1996 (7.6 per 1,000). At the same time there has been an increase in mortality from diseases such as tuberculosis and ischemic heart disease; that is linked to the decline in living conditions.

9. Despite showing some stabilization, the high levels of mortality among women during pregnancy, labour and the lying-in period, and among babies in the first year of life (maternal and infant mortality), give particular cause for alarm. In 1997, deaths in these categories numbered over 80 for women (81 per 100,000 births) and approximately 3,000 for infants (28 per 1,000 births).

10. The principal causes of maternal mortality are renal, liver, cardiovascular and endocrine disorders and infectious diseases causing severe toxaemia accompanied by the development of multiple organ failure and postpartum haemorrhage, with subsequent fatal outcome. Respiratory disorders and perinatal complications are the main causes of infant mortality.

11. External migration in 1997 fell by a factor of 1.6 compared with the previous year to total 17,000 as against 12,000 emigrants.

12. As a result of these processes, Kyrgyzstan's population increased by 59,000 (1.3 per cent) in 1997. As of 1 January 1998, the total population was 4,666,000.

13. Ethnic composition of the population. As of 1 January 1997, Kyrgyz accounted for 60.8 per cent of the population, Russians for 15.3 per cent, Uzbeks for 14.3 per cent, and Ukrainians for 1.5 per cent. Kyrgyzstan is also home to groups of Germans, Tartars, Kazakhs, Koreans, Uigurs, Tajiks and Dungans - more than 80 nationalities in all.

14. Level of education of the population. In 1997, the number of Kyrgyz citizens with (complete or incomplete) higher and secondary education was 872 per 1,000 of population aged 15 years and over. Of this total, 101 had complete higher education; 15 had incomplete higher education; 150 had specialized secondary education, 409 had general secondary education; and 197 had incomplete secondary education.

15. The main indicator of the level and rate of the country's economic development is GDP. In 1995 there were indications that the economy had stabilized, as evidenced by slowing of the decline of GDP (GDP in 1995 was 94.6 per cent of the 1994 figure); in 1996, GDP actually grew (107.1 per cent). GDP for 1996 (in current prices) was 23,399,300 som, or 44.9 per cent higher in nominal terms than the 1995 level and 13.2 per cent higher than the GDP forecast made in the indicative plan for the social and economic development of the Kyrgyz Republic for the period 1996 to 2000. Nominal GDP for 1997 is estimated to have been 30,438,000 som, or 10.4 per cent higher in volume terms than the previous year.

16. Consumer price trends in respect of non-food goods were influenced by restrained effective demand from the population. From the beginning of the year growth in non-food prices was far lower than growth in food and service prices; it totalled 120 per cent. In 1997 the growth of prices and tariffs for remunerated services (145.8 per cent) far outstripped the growth in consumer goods prices (133.4 per cent). Over the year as a whole the prices of staple foods, the principal item in consumer expenditure, rose significantly. In 1996 the biggest price increases concerned fruit and

berries (240 per cent), eggs, milk and poultry (160 per cent), and dairy products, flour, pasta, bread and bakery products (120-140 per cent).

17. In 1997 there was a steady slow-down in the rate of increase of consumer prices. Prices rose 14.8 per cent on average, with food posting an increase of 17.4 per cent, services 15.4 per cent and non-food items 7.3 per cent. The biggest rises concerned meat and poultry (160 per cent), sugar (120 per cent) and vegetable oil (130 per cent).

18. Of the remunerated services surveyed, it was nursery school fees that showed the biggest increase (140 per cent) in 1997. Housing costs rose by 25.8 per cent, transport services by 22.4 per cent and communications by 8.3 per cent.

19. Under article 34 of the Kyrgyz Constitution, State health-care institutions offer guaranteed free medical assistance. The Government has identified and approved categories and groups of the population entitled to receive free medical assistance. Subject to the consent of the patient or his next of kin, paid services may be provided in emergencies.

20. During periods of social transformation, the population's standard of living declines. Incomes fall and for people generally, and society's most vulnerable members in particular, many social benefits become unaffordable.

21. With a view to regulating the provision of remunerated medical services, a draft law has been drawn up on the extrabudgetary activity of Kyrgyz health-care institutions. It establishes a list of the remunerated medical services which may be offered to those able to pay for them. The Government is making provision for targeted funding to organize a summertime health-building campaign for children under 14 years of age. Trade unions subsidize permits for sanatorium and restorative holidays. It must be admitted, however, that for most people a visit to a sanatorium, resort, sporting or tourism facility is still a rarity.

22. Public health is also affected by the disturbed ecological balance in the Republic, variously attributable to the change in the Aral basin, nuclear testing in neighbouring States and the hazardous condition of subsurface ponds for radioactive tailings.

23. As of 1 January 1998, 54,600 citizens were officially registered as being unemployed. Women account for 58 per cent of that total.

24. Females comprise over half (55 per cent) of the under-age unemployed and 60 per cent of young unemployed people between the ages of 16 and 29. Nearly 67 per cent of unemployed women are raising minors, and 19 per cent of them have five or more children.

II. GENERAL POLITICAL STRUCTURE

A. Brief historical survey

25. In the third century B.C., the Kyrgyz tribes were the most culturally and economically advanced ethnic group in southern Siberia. In the

fourth century, a vast association of tribes resembling the barbarian kingdoms of Western Europe was formed under the supremacy of the Kyrgyz. At the height of its power, this association covered the upper Enisei basin and all of southern Siberia, including Altai and Mongolia.

26. The Kyrgyz great power was short-lived. In the tenth century A.D. Kyrgyzstan was the core territory of the Qarakhanid State. In the thirteenth century the Mongol invasion brought about significant political and economic changes. Ethnographical characteristics changed. Intermingling and assimilation of ethnic groups occurred. The fifteenth century was characterized by renewed feudal strife in the Mongol Empire; Kyrgyz tribes began to consolidate into State-like federations. Between 1850 and 1870 Kyrgyzstan became a subject of the Russian Empire. Soviet power was established between November 1917 and June 1918. Kyrgyzstan became an autonomous oblast, an autonomous republic and a union in 1924, 1926 and 1936 respectively. The principal events between 1936 and 1991 were victory in the Second World War, the "thaw" under Khrushchev, "stagnation" under Brezhnev, the vacillations of perestroika under Gorbachev and the collapse of the totalitarian system.

27. Kyrgyzstan declared its independence on 31 August 1991. In the Declaration on the State independence of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan solemnly proclaimed the country to be an independent sovereign State.

B. State structure, political system, form of government

28. Under the Constitution, the Kyrgyz Republic is a sovereign, unitary, democratic republic founded on the rule of law and a secular State. The sovereignty of the Kyrgyz Republic is not limited and extends to all of its territory. The Kyrgyz people is the repository of sovereignty and the sole source of State power in the Kyrgyz Republic.

29. Only the elected Zhogorku Kenesh (Parliament) and the President of the Kyrgyz Republic are entitled to speak for the people of Kyrgyzstan. Amendments to and revisions of the Constitution, laws and other important issues in the life of the State may be put to a referendum.

30. In its form of government, Kyrgyzstan combines elements of a presidential and a parliamentary republic (a presidential-parliamentary republic).

The President of the Kyrgyz Republic

31. The President of the Kyrgyz Republic is the head of State, the highest official in the country, a symbol of national unity and State power, and the guarantor of the Constitution and human and civil rights and freedoms. The head of State determines the main lines of the State's domestic and foreign policy, represents the Kyrgyz Republic inside the country and in the context of international relations, takes measures to protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Kyrgyz Republic, and safeguards the unity and continuity of State power, the coordination and interaction of State organs and their accountability to the people.

32. The President of the Kyrgyz Republic is elected for a term of five years. The same individual cannot be elected President for more than two consecutive terms. The presidency must be held by a Kyrgyz citizen not less than 35 and not more than 65 years of age who speaks the national language and has been resident in the country for at least 15 years prior to his nomination for the presidency.

The legislature

33. The Amendment and Supplementing of the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic Act of 17 February 1996, which was adopted by referendum on 10 February 1996, stipulates that the legislative branch of the Kyrgyz Republic shall be the Zhogorku Kenesh (Parliament), a bicameral representative body comprising: the Legislative Assembly, a standing body of 35 elected deputies representing the interests of the population as a whole, and the sessional Assembly of People's Representatives, which numbers 70 elected deputies representing territorial interests. The deputies of the Legislative Assembly and the Assembly of People's Representatives are elected for a term of five years.

34. The Legislative Assembly of the Zhogorku Kenesh is responsible for: amending and supplementing the Constitution in line with prescribed constitutional procedure; enacting laws; officially interpreting the Constitution and the laws which it has itself enacted; modifying the borders of the Kyrgyz Republic, and approving laws enacted by the Assembly of People's Representatives.

35. The Assembly of People's Representatives of the Zhogorku Kenesh is responsible for: amending and supplementing the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic; enacting laws in certain cases provided for by the Constitution; approving laws enacted by the Legislative Assembly in cases specified by the Constitution; officially interpreting the Constitution and laws which it has itself enacted; passing the budget and certifying the national accounts, and modifying the jurisdiction of city and military courts of the Kyrgyz Republic.

The executive

36. Article 69 of the Constitution stipulates that executive power in the Kyrgyz Republic shall be exercised by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, its subordinate ministries, State committees, administrative departments, and the local State administration.

37. The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic is the country's highest executive organ. The Government is headed by the Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic and consists of the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Ministers, ministers and the chairmen of the State Committees of the Kyrgyz Republic.

38. The Prime Minister is appointed by the President with the consent of the Assembly of People's Representatives. The Prime Minister outlines the general direction of government policy in accordance with the Constitution, the laws and presidential decrees. He also organizes the Government's work and is personally responsible for its performance.

The judiciary

39. Article 79 of the Constitution stipulates that justice in the Kyrgyz Republic shall be administered solely by the courts.

40. The following courts exist in the Kyrgyz Republic: the Constitutional Court, the Supreme Court, the High Court of Arbitration and the local courts (oblast courts, Bishkek city court, district courts, city courts, oblast arbitration courts, Bishkek arbitration court, and military courts).

41. The Constitutional Court of the Kyrgyz Republic is the highest judicial organ for the protection of the Constitution. It declares laws and other regulatory acts to be unconstitutional in cases where they depart from the Constitution, and it settles disputes concerning the operation, application and interpretation of the Constitution. Decisions of the Constitutional Court are final and unappealable.

42. The Supreme Court of the Kyrgyz Republic is the highest judicial organ in respect of civil, criminal and administrative proceedings. The Supreme Court supervises the judicial activity of the oblast, Bishkek city and district courts.

43. The High Court of Arbitration of the Kyrgyz Republic and the oblast and Bishkek arbitration courts form the unified system of arbitration courts of the Kyrgyz Republic. Arbitration courts settle disputes arising in the economic sphere and in business between entities under various forms of ownership. The High Court of Arbitration of the Kyrgyz Republic supervises the judicial activity of the oblast and Bishkek arbitration courts.

44. Decisions handed down by the Kyrgyz courts which have acquired legal force are binding on all State organs, businesses, public associations, officials and citizens and are subject to execution throughout the territory of Kyrgyzstan. Failure to execute judicial decisions which have acquired legal force, and also interference in the work of the courts, incurs liability as specified by the law.

III. GENERAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Law enforcement organs.

45. The work of the law enforcement organs is based on unconditional compliance with the laws of the Kyrgyz Republic and international treaties in respect of citizens' rights, freedoms and lawful interests. Law enforcement in the Kyrgyz Republic is the preserve of special organs including the Procurator's Office, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and its subsidiary organs, the Ministry of National Security, the Ministry of Justice and lawyers.

46. The Office of the Procurator of the Kyrgyz Republic is a State body within the executive branch with responsibility for verifying that legislative instruments are strictly and uniformly observed by local self-government organs, ministries, State committees, administrative departments and other

government organs, local State administration, public associations, officials, businesses regardless of their form of ownership, and citizens.

47. The Ministry of Internal Affairs is an armed State law enforcement organ which performs executive and administrative functions connected with the maintenance of public order, the protection of personal and public safety and the fight against crime.

48. The Ministry of Justice is the primary administrative organ for implementing State legal policy as regards protection of the rights and lawful interests of citizens and of legal persons whatever their form of ownership.

49. The Ministry of National Security and other national security organs belong to the executive branch and are intended for preventing harm to the security of the Kyrgyz Republic; within the limits of the powers entrusted to them, they also ensure personal, public and State security, and expose, prevent and suppress espionage and subversion by foreign intelligence services and organizations.

50. Lawyers help to protect the rights and lawful interests of citizens and organizations. They also facilitate the administration of justice and the observance and strengthening of the law. They mainly: advise on and elucidate legal problems; represent clients before the courts and other State organs in civil and administrative cases, and frame applications, appeals and other documents of a legal nature.

51. No person may be arrested or detained otherwise than prescribed by law. All acts tending to attribute guilt for an offence before there has been a verdict by a court are inadmissible and constitute grounds for the award of material or moral damages to the aggrieved party through the intermediary of a court.

52. The rules enshrined in the Constitution are in accord with the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international covenants and instruments pertaining to human rights. Under national law, all Kyrgyz citizens are equally entitled to the protection of their rights and freedoms regardless of their national or social origin, sex, language, political or other opinions, religion, place of residence, property or other status. Judicial protection of rights and freedoms is guaranteed, and citizens are, therefore, entitled to seek redress through the courts if they believe that their rights have been violated.

Special organs for the protection of human rights

53. In order to establish effective machinery for protecting human rights and assisting the President in exercising his constitutional powers as guarantor of human and civil rights and freedoms, a presidential decree was issued on 5 July 1997 establishing a Human Rights Commission reporting to the President of the Kyrgyz Republic.

54. The State Commission for the Family and Women, which reports to the Kyrgyz Government, was established in 1996. The Commission deals with the

implementation of priority measures to resolve the most important issues facing women and addresses topics relevant to their rights and freedoms.

55. A Commission for Minors has been established within the Kyrgyz Government. Similar structures have been formed in the regions.

56. Organs to deal with the problems facing families, women and children operate at all levels in the Kyrgyz Republic. A Human Rights Committee and a Commission on Education, Women, the Family and Youth operate in the Legislative Assembly of the Zhogorku Kenesh.

57. A large number of non-governmental organizations involved in the protection of human rights are currently operating in Kyrgyzstan. Many of them provide the public with information about the rights and freedoms guaranteed under the Constitution and international human rights instruments.

58. For the purposes of drafting for submission to the relevant United Nations organs the country's initial reports on the legislative, administrative and other measures taken by the Kyrgyz Government in pursuance of human rights conventions, the Kyrgyz Government issued an Ordinance on 27 June 1997 establishing an interdepartmental commission entrusted with the preparation of national reports on Kyrgyzstan's implementation of human rights conventions.

Constitutional protection of civil and political rights

59. Kyrgyzstan's Basic Law is the Constitution adopted by the Zhogorku Kenesh in 1993, as amended and revised on 17 February 1996. It contains a special section outlining the rights and freedoms of the individual and the duties of the citizen.

60. Article 16 of the Constitution recognizes and guarantees fundamental human rights and freedoms in accordance with universally accepted principles and standards of international law and the inter-State treaties and agreements concerning human rights which have been ratified by the Kyrgyz Republic. Everyone in the Kyrgyz Republic has the right to life, physical and moral immunity, personal freedom and security, freedom of personal development, freedom of religion, spiritual life and worship, free expression and dissemination of their thoughts, ideas and opinions, freedom of literary, artistic, scientific and technical creativity, freedom of the press, freedom to transmit and disseminate information, freedom of movement, freedom to choose a place of abode or residence anywhere in Kyrgyzstan, freedom to travel abroad and to return without hindrance, freedom of association and peaceable unarmed assembly, freedom to hold rallies and demonstrations, inviolability of the home, freedom and privacy of correspondence, dignity, freedom of private life, personal and family privacy, private postal, telegraph and telephone communications, the right to own property and to possess, use and administer it at their discretion, economic freedom, free use of their abilities and property for any type of economic activity, freedom of labour and the right freely to choose their occupation or profession.

61. The enumeration of rights and freedoms in the Constitution should not be interpreted as negating or diminishing other universally recognized human rights and freedoms.

62. On 12 January 1994 the Zhogorku Kenesh adopted a Decision on accession to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, necessitating the adoption of a number of measures to establish a legal mechanism for implementing the provisions of the Covenant. These measures include the enactment of new laws, the amendments of existing laws, and the drafting of regulatory and normative instruments to govern the activities of State organs in respect of civil and political human rights.

63. The Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic stipulates that inter-State treaties and other rules of international law which have been ratified by the Kyrgyz Republic form an integral and directly applicable part of Kyrgyz law. The Kyrgyz Republic recognizes the principles and standards of international law and has signed international treaties and agreements concerning human rights; these principles and standards are reflected in domestic law. All the necessary steps are being taken to ensure that the law not only proclaims human rights but also protects them.

64. One of the challenges of establishing the rule of law in Kyrgyzstan is to adopt legal rules and measures for their application that take account of universally recognized human rights standards. International human rights instruments are taken into account in the elaboration of new law in Kyrgyzstan. Representatives from international and non-governmental organizations are enlisted as experts when drawing up new Kyrgyz legislation.

65. The legal reform under way in Kyrgyzstan provides for the incorporation of inalienable human rights and the security and legal protection of the individual in the law of the land. The following new laws have been enacted on the basis of international human rights standards: The Civil Code (Parts 1 and 2); the Criminal Code; the Labour Code; the Consumer Protection Act.

66. Although the requirements of the Covenants have been met in terms of both tenor and content by the improvement in the overall statutory framework and the adoption between 1994 and 1997 of a number of laws and other normative instruments, the system for ensuring the legal protection of citizens is still inadequate. The main reason is that the Kyrgyz Republic still lacks a uniform State policy for the integrated solution of all problems connected with human rights.

Human rights protection on the basis of international standards

67. Since acquiring its sovereignty, the Kyrgyz Republic has acceded to 22 international human rights treaties within the framework of the United Nations and its specialized agencies:

1. The Convention on the Rights of the Child;

2. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

3. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

4. The Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

5. The International Labour Organization Convention concerning Migration for Employment;

6. The International Labour Organization Convention concerning Equality of Treatment of Nationals and Non-Nationals in Social Security;

7. The International Labour Organization Convention concerning the Establishment of an International System for the Maintenance of Rights in Social Security;

8. The Convention against Discrimination in Education;

9. The Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees;

10. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (came into force on 3 September 1981);

11. The Convention on the Political Rights of Women (came into force on 7 July 1954);

12. The Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage Registration of Marriages (came into force on 9 December 1964);

13. The Convention on the Nationality of Married Women (came into force on 11 August 1958);

14. ILO Convention No. 103 concerning Maternity Protection (Revised) (came into force on 7 September 1955);

15. The International Convention against Apartheid in Sport (came into force on 10 December 1985);

16. The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (came into force on 26 June 1987);

17. The Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others;

18. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (came into force on 4 January 1969);

19. The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (came into force on 12 January 1961);

20. The Slavery Convention and the Protocol amending the Slavery Convention signed at Geneva on 25 September 1926 (came into force on 7 December 1953);

21. The Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery (came into force on 30 April 1957);

22. The International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.

68. In addition, Kyrgyzstan is a party to human rights treaties within the Commonwealth of Independent States.

IV. INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY

69. Article 41 of the Constitution states that the publication of laws and other normative instruments concerning human and citizens' rights, freedoms and duties shall constitute a mandatory condition of their application.

70. The Kyrgyz Government is endeavouring to raise public awareness of various matters pertaining to the human rights and freedoms guaranteed to citizens under the Constitution and the various international treaties, including the Covenant to which Kyrgyzstan is a party.

71. Most of the work of disseminating information to the public regarding the principles and provisions of international human rights treaties is carried out by the Kyrgyz Government, the Commission for the Family and Women, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, the Ministry of Health, the State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company and other ministries and administrative departments directly concerned, and by non-governmental organizations.

72. The International Committee of the Red Cross is funding the publication of a textbook entitled Chelovek i obshchestvo (The Individual and Society) for a mass readership. In addition to providing essential educational material, it outlines the main concepts of international humanitarian law.

73. The texts of the international treaties ratified by the Kyrgyz Republic have been printed in the Gazette of the Zhogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic. The texts of all the ratified conventions have been translated into the official State language and the national languages of the Republic (in particular, Russian and Uzbek).

74. A series of digests on human rights issues have been published in Kyrgyzstan, and the compilations of international human rights instruments published by the United Nations have been widely circulated.

75. Kyrgyz non-governmental organizations regularly publish newsletters about the human rights situation in the country, for example Sredstva massovoi informatsii: zakonodatelstvo i praktika (The Mass Media: Law and Practice).

76. Human rights are taught as a topic in many universities and schools as part of the general education curriculum.

77. To enhance judges' skills, the Kyrgyz judiciary is in the process of setting up an authority to teach local-court judges how to use modern office equipment, familiarize them with changes in the law, and so forth. It is also intended to familiarize them with the United Nations treaties which have been ratified by Kyrgyzstan, specifically the human rights instruments.

78. To foster the application of ratified international human rights treaties, regular seminars are held in Kyrgyzstan for representatives of State organs, judicial bodies and members of the public. The following seminars are worthy of note:

(a) "International human rights standards and their domestic implementation", a seminar organized in Bishkek from 25 to 28 November 1996 by the International Commission of Jurists and the Constitutional Court of the Kyrgyz Republic with the participation of representatives of the judiciary, lawyers, government bodies and non-governmental organizations;

(b) "Human rights: national institutions and mechanisms", a round table conference held in Bishkek on 9 April 1997 organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic with the participation of representatives of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) the Polish Ombudsman, Kyrgyz government bodies and non-governmental organizations;

(c) "Journalism and the law", an international seminar held from 22 to 24 April 1997 by the Soros-Kyrgyzstan Foundation and the Kyrgyz-American Bureau on Human Rights and Rule of Law, with special emphasis on protecting the rights of journalists and freedom of the mass media;

(d) "The constitutional dimension of legal reform and the legal system", a seminar held in Bishkek on 17 and 18 June organized by the Council of Europe in conjunction with the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights and the Kyrgyz Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Justice;

(e) A workshop held in Bishkek from 13 to 15 October 1997 on the submission of State reports and individual complaints to human rights treaty bodies organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in conjunction with the International Commission of Jurists and attended by representatives of government bodies involved in preparing reports and of non-governmental organizations.